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WHITE HOUSE STATEMENT

[Monday Evening] 6(5)

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for comment

When information was first received of the military build up in Cuba, the President on September 4 issued a release from the White House stating that the military build up although substantial was entirely defensive. The statement then continued as follows: "There is no evidence of the presence of offensive ground-to-ground missiles; or of other significant offensive capability either in Cuban hands or under Soviet direction. Were it to be otherwise the gravest issues would arise."

On September 13, at his press conference, the President further stated as follows: "If at any time the Communist build-up in Cuba were to endanger or interfere with our security in any way, including our base at Guantanamo, our passage to the Panama Canal, our missile and space activities at Cape Canaveral, or the

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

IS, FPC/CDR

Date:

4/8/92

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lives of American citizens in this country, or if Cuba should ever attempt to export its aggressive purposes by force or the threat of force against any nation in this hemisphere, or become an offensive military base of significant capacity for the Soviet Union, then this country will do whatever must be done to protect its own security and that of its allies.

"We shall be alert, too, and fully capable of dealing swiftly with any such development. As President and Commander-in-Chief, I have full authority now to take such action, and I have asked the Congress to authorize me to call up reserve forces should this or any other crisis make it necessary."

In addition, in answer to a question as to when the build-up would be considered offensive, he said: "I think if you read last week's statement and the statement today, I made it quite clear, particularly in last week's statement, when we talked

about

about the presence of offensive military missile capacity or development of military base and other indications which I gave last week, all those would, of course, indicate a change in the nature of the threat."

Finally, the Congress in joint resolution adopted on September 26, resolved "That the United States is determined to prevent in Cuba the creation or use of an externally supported military capability endangering the security of the United States."

[In the face of these clear and unequivocal warnings, we have just received from unimpeachable sources information that the Communist Cuban regime has now received and is well along in the process of installing a series of offensive military missiles whose range would cover practically the whole of the Continental United States as well as all of Central and Northern South

America]

[America. In addition it has received a consignment of IL-28
medium range
medium range ~~bowlers~~ capable of carrying nuclear weapons and
with a range of _____ miles, a weapon that can by no means
be considered as defensive.

This situation is wholly intolerable to the United States
and action will have to be taken to cure it.

Accordingly, I have informed President Dorticos of ~~South~~
Cuba of the extreme gravity with which we look upon this situation
in the hope that the Cuban regime will immediately agree to
the prompt dismantlement of these installations under
international inspection.

I am also calling the Congress to meet in special session
on Thursday to consider what further action may be necessary
at that time.